

**Carlisle Conservation Commission**  
**February 28, 2013**

Pursuant to the notice filed with the Town Clerk, Chair Kelly Guarino called the meeting to order in the Clark Room at the Town Hall at 7:35 p.m. Also present were Commissioners Tom Brown, Tom Brownrigg, Peter Burn, Jen Bush and Lee Tatistcheff and Conservation Administrator Sylvia Willard. Vice Chair Luke Ascolillo was not present.

**Bills, General Agenda Items & New/Pending or Old Business:**

**Minutes:**

*Burn moved to accept the **January 10, 2013** minutes as amended, Brownrigg seconded and all voted in favor with the exception of Bush, who abstained.*

*Brownrigg moved to accept the **January 24, 2013** minutes as amended, Burn seconded and all voted in favor with the exception of Brown, who abstained.*

**Certificate of Compliance:**

**(DEP 125-0913) Lot 4, 112 Johnson Road;** Applicant: Paul Gaboury; Installation of a foundation drain and grading associated with a soil absorption system; issued: 2/27/2013. Based on Willard's recommendations that the project had been completed substantially in compliance with the Plan of Record as confirmed by the project engineer, *Burn moved to issue a Certificate of Compliance for DEP #125-0913, Tatistcheff seconded and all voted in favor.*

**Emergency Certificate Reissue - 493 Lowell Street:** The property owner needs a new Emergency Certificate to replace a previously signed one allowing for the removal of three trees that were damaged as a result of Hurricane Sandy. The property owner has now been able to submit the required statement from her neighbor at 97 Sunset Road allowing the tree contractor access from her driveway. *Bush moved to reissue the Emergency Certificate to Martha Talbot of 493 Lowell Road for tree removal, Burn seconded and all voted in favor.*

**Plan Change Request (DEP #125-0930) 150 Hanover Road; Bentley Building Corp.:** The project engineer has requested approval of a Plan Change allowing relocation of the house and driveway. The revised design locates the house greater than 100 feet from the wetland and eliminates grading that had been planned for the buffer zone. *Brown moved to approve the Plan Change Request for DEP #125-0930 as reflected on the revised Plan dated January 13, 2013, Tatistcheff seconded and all voted in favor.*

**RIFLS Program Update** – Cranberry Bog Steward Warren Lyman presented an update on the River Instream Flow Stewards (RIFLS) Program being implemented to monitor streamflow from Heart Pond in Chelmsford and the downstream portions of River Meadow Brook. Lyman had requested assistance from the Department of Fish and Game's Division of Ecological Restoration to establish monitoring sites in order to better understand the potential impacts of a proposed public water supply well field in Chelmsford. The program will enable the stewards to address concerns relative to potential impacts on surface water uses for wildlife habitat and agriculture, particularly during low flow periods.

Lyman explained that the state will establish stream gauge monitoring stations which will be monitored by volunteer stewards under the guidelines of the RIFLS Program to take daily measurements and upload the data to a state database. A preliminary site visit was conducted on February 20, 2013 including two representatives from the town of Chelmsford, Watershed Ecologists Laila Parker and Michelle Craddock from the state's Division of Ecological Restoration, along with Cranberry Bog Stewards Warren Lyman and Debby Geltner and Conservation Administrator Willard.

During the visit, the group discussed the site challenges of monitoring including the multiple flow control points, and the multi use and multi management entities including the Heart Pond Association, the Chelmsford Conservation Commission, Carlisle Cranberries, Inc., the Carlisle Conservation Commission, and Great Brook Farm State Park.

Lyman reported that application for the monitoring program was approved on February 21, and the state will move forward with plans for the installation of two monitoring stations including one near the location where River Meadow Brook flows under Curve Street and the other at the outlet from Heart Pond. Volunteer monitoring stewards from Carlisle and Chelmsford will be trained to conduct daily flow monitoring and data reporting.

The state has requested that the stewards maintain a record of water flow and water use management actions such as releases from Hart Pond, impounding and releasing events by Carlisle Cranberries, Inc., irrigation events by Carlisle Cranberries and any other unusual actions that impact water flows, including rainfall events. Lyman said the goal of the program is to get to a point that we will see when the critical time periods are relative to low flow periods, and then from that we may be able to do some educated

assessments of upstream water withdrawal activities. Lyman noted that Heart Pond Association, Great Brook Farm State Park and Carlisle Cranberries, Inc. have been officially informed of this project.

Guarino thanked Lyman for his efforts which will be helpful to the town in trying to gain a better handle on the cycle of releases from impoundments. Brown and Brownrigg agreed to assist with the stream monitoring activities. *Tatistcheff moved to accept the proposed RIFLS Monitoring Program as proposed and accepted by the Mass Dept. of Fish and Game's Division of Ecological Restoration, Bush seconded and all voted in favor.*

**8:00 p.m. Conservation Land Agricultural Farmers' Meeting:** The Commission conducted their annual review of the Carlisle Agricultural Land Use Reporting and Land Use Planning Forms that had been submitted by farmers holding agricultural license agreements with the town.

**Fox Hill East:** First to discuss the previous growing season was Kevin Brown, who holds the agreement on Fox Hill East with Dick Shohet. He said they took one crop of hay last year because it was such an abundant early season crop. Maintenance done last year included brush clearing all along inside of the rock wall along the road. They received assistance from the DPW to remove damaged/fallen trees with very little impact to the field. Along the field edge that runs parallel to Stearns Street, they pushed brush and buckthorn back right up to rock wall in late winter/early spring with the help of John Bakewell.

It was a good year, overall, and they continued to mow the upper quadrant and pushed back as well along the edge. The only area they didn't tackle was the area between the upper and lower fields. Brown said that it would be quite an undertaking to try to reclaim some of that edge back.

Guarino asked Brown whether he thought edge clearing using heavy equipment as was done at Foss would be helpful. She said that the Commission has an interest in seeing that field edges are maintained as part of the license agreements, but they realize that over the years fields are getting smaller. The question is at which location does the Commission need to tackle this next. Brown said they would be open to getting some help on the area between the upper and lower fields, where he estimated it could be pushed back 30 to 40 feet. Burn asked that Brown please refer Gary Davis of the DPW to the Commission before offering his assistance in the future, given the presence of wetlands in the area.

Brown said they really appreciate the use of the field as it is very integral to their cattle operation, particularly since they have been juggling hay fields recently. He said they anticipate that they will likely need to hay twice during the upcoming growing season to try to compensate for fewer available fields.

**Towle Field:** Dick Shohet provided a brief history of the Towle land, for which he has an Agricultural Land Use Agreement with the Town of Carlisle. He said the land has a long history of agricultural production, dating from before the Towle family purchased the land in 1912. When town purchased the land from the Towle family in 1968 with state and federal assistance, "it promised great things for the town of Carlisle". Shohet said that, unfortunately over recent years, the field has increasingly been taken over with poison ivy, rendering the hay useless as feed for his livestock.

This issue, together with the loss of three quarters of their haying fields following the purchase of Clark Farm, will likely require Mill Iron Farms to curtail their production. He appealed to the Commission to address the loss of open fields due to the invasives not only for haying activities but also for the passive and active recreation that were once so handily available. He cited the Towle Field Baseline Assessment and Management Plan documents prepared by the Land Stewardship Committee in which the issues of preserving the open fields for such agricultural activities as haying, as well as the need to eradicate the invasive species, were identified as high priorities. He also cited a report prepared in 2011 by the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife's Landowner Incentive Program stating that the application of herbicides is not only the single best option for poison ivy eradication, but also the most cost effective solution.

Guarino thanked Shohet for his comments on Towle Field. She said the Commission has had a number of discussions about the lack of maintenance on fields that are increasingly being taken over by invasives, and they are looking at proposed solutions in order to determine a plan.

**Fox Hill West:** John Bakewell reported that last year was a tough year for them. They bailed on a chicken pasture due to pest management issues. They experimented with lentils and other legumes on the grain field and it was not as successful as they had hoped due to drought, browsing and weed control issues. Their established tree crops survived the drought conditions for the most part, including growth in their Christmas, fruit and shade trees. As for maintenance, they did a combination of brush hogging three times and mowing four times over the season, as well as spraying for poison ivy and took a crack at pushing back invasives. Bakewell said there is not the same kind of distinct edges that existed when they first took over the field and it went from field to a "wall of brush". The poison ivy is pretty much done on a practical usability scale although they continue to find it as they continue to push the brush back, which he said is a testament to their spraying practices. Guarino asked how long it took them to get the poison ivy under control, and he estimated it took about a year of targeted spraying. Tatistcheff asked which method spraying he had used - blanket vs. spot spraying. Bakewell said he preferred backpack spraying using Triclopyr, which he has found to be very effective and does not kill the grass like Roundup. Tatistcheff asked whether Triclopyr had been approved for use in wetlands. Bakewell said it depends on the formulation. Guarino asked whether it would be useful to consider Fox Hill West for a future edge

clearing project similar to what was done at Foss. Bakewell said that it's not simply a matter of removing the trees but is also a matter of removing the stumps as part of the clearing activity, which is a long-term process. They would welcome assistance in additional edge clearing using heavy equipment if this is an option that becomes available in the future. As for plans for the upcoming growing season, they will grow vegetables including potatoes and squash in the fenced in area. In the grain field they will plant barley and will plant additional Christmas and shade trees.

**Sugar Maple Tapping at Towle Field:** Kayleigh Boyle provided a Land Use Report on behalf of Gaining Ground, a non profit organization which grows organic produce with the help of hundreds of community volunteers and donates all of this fresh food to area meal programs and food pantries. She reported they have been tapping sugar maples in Carlisle for three years. Last year, the weather did not allow for a great season. They tapped a total of 130 trees, 12 of which are in Carlisle, and they bottled approximately 29 gallons of syrup. She commented that most of the trees in Carlisle are nice, healthy specimens, with the exception of two or three trees at Towle that appeared to be diseased, likely due to the effects of road salt. The current season is going well and they anticipate tapping through mid march. She encouraged people to check their web site for information on their upcoming sap boiling events, which are held at their sugar house in Concord and are open to the public.

Guarino thanked the farmers for their updates and said she personally very much appreciates the agriculture in Carlisle and all of the work the farmers do to keep it going. She said the Commission wants to continue doing whatever they can to support that work.

#### **8:45 p.m. (DEP 125-0934) Notice of Intent, Continued Hearing**

**Applicant: Peter Casserly**

**Project Location: 509 South Street**

**Project Description: Raze existing dwelling and sheds, installation of a well, construction of a new dwelling and sewage disposal system**

Guarino opened the continued hearing under the provisions of the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act and the Carlisle Wetlands Protection Bylaw. Guarino noted that although she was not present at the previous hearing, the Commission has four commissioners who are eligible to participate in the vote.

Kevin Ritchie of Civil Solutions presented a revised Plan dated 2/28 to reflecting the following changes based on previous discussions with the Commission: 1) a double ring of haybales as well as a sedimentation basin have been added to encompass the proposed well, which is approximately 22' from the wetland; 2) the haybale line has been moved to be placed between the stonewall at the rear of the property and the proposed dwelling, which will be completed upon removal of the existing shed located in that area; 3) the haybale line has also been adjusted to accommodate the cutting and saving of trees along the wetland line; 4) all trees 8" and larger within 25 feet of the wetlands have been located and added to the Plan; 5) a proposed stone wall in the front yard has been removed from the Plan; 6) conservation notes have been added to the Plan relative to the proposal to maintain a 25' buffer between the wetlands and the proposed work using woodchips and planting a staggered row of blueberry bushes.

*Tatistcheff moved to close the public hearing for DEP #125-0934, Brown seconded and all voted in favor.*

For the record Guarino noted that this proposal involves work that is extremely close to the wetland and the Commission appreciates the efforts that have been made to accommodate their concerns and to pull it back. She also noted that this was a previously disturbed site, with the Plan providing some site improvements in terms of moving the well and shed away from the wetlands.

*With no further discussion, Tatistcheff moved to issue a Standard Order of Conditions with the following Special Conditions: 1) a construction entrance shall be built within the first 50 feet of the proposed driveway consisting of a 6" layer of course stone underlaid with geotextile fabric for stabilization. The purpose is to eliminate tracking of soil from the construction site onto South Street and into nearby bordering vegetated wetlands;*

*2) the Conservation Commission office shall be notified 48 hours prior to the work to remove the existing shallow well; 3) The Orders of Conditions will also contain the Continuing Condition allowing the removal of exotic invasive plants by hand or hand tool removal methods within the 100-foot Buffer Zone of a BVW upon submission of a replanting plan subject to the Commission's approval. Burn seconded the motion and all voted in favor with the exception of Brown and Guarino, who abstained.*

**Open Space and Recreation Plan:** Willard provided a status update on the project, reporting that the revised GIS mapping has been sent out for updating. The OS&R committee is now working on completing the charts, with a goal of submitting a final Plan to the State sometime in May following the required public comment period, although this may change.

**Elliott Preserve Update:** Willard reported working recently with Town Counsel on the Warrant Articles relative the Elliott Preserve purchase, including \$150,000 in CPC funding and \$30,000 from the Conservation Fund. She noted that, since the purchase will involve the use of non-CPA town funds, Town Counsel is also providing recommendations relative to the

requirements associated with the Uniform Procurement Act process. Guarino reported that the Board of Selectmen (BOS) had voiced their support for the Elliott Preserve Warrant Articles at their previous meeting.

**Cranberry Bog Agricultural Committee (CBAC) Goals:** Willard said she had received a request from the CBAC requesting clarification on the Commissions' goals relative to the terms of the new lease. Guarino said it was her understanding that the Committee would provide a draft lease agreement that addresses the primary issues the Commission has previously discussed including: preserving water rights, maintaining an active cranberry bog operation; maintaining the infrastructure of the bog; retaining public access; incorporating provisions and incentives for in kind services for housing; encouraging active growing within the restoration area of the bog. Brown, who is a member of the CBAC, said the committee hopes to come to a consensus at their upcoming meeting as to what the issues are and present back their findings, including any issues the Commission may not be aware of.

**776 East Street -Right of 1<sup>st</sup> Refusal:** Several members of the Commission had recently conducted a site visit to the property in order to provide a recommendation to the BOS as to the conservation value of the parcel relative to the town's Right of First Refusal. Subsequent to that, Willard reported having received a call from the property owners informing her that they are not selling the property, just removing it from Chapter 61A status. Guarino suggested that the Commission request clarification from Town Counsel relative to what, if anything, is required now that the owner has announced he is not selling the property.

**SuAsCo CISMA Spring Meeting:** Willard distributed information relative to the upcoming SuAsCo Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area (CISMA) meeting to be held on March 12, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. at the Assabet River National Wildlife Refuge's Visitor Center in Sudbury. Elizabeth Farnsworth from the New England Wild Flower Society will discuss "21st Century Tools for Tackling Invasive Plants: Identify, Prioritize, Mobilize!"

**FEMA Updated Flood Insurance Rate Maps:** Willard and Planning Board Administrator George Mansfield recently attended a FEMA meeting relative to the draft revised Flood Insurance Maps that have been created for the entire SuAsCo river basin. The new maps were produced using LIDAR technology, a remote sensing method used to examine the surface of the earth in order to much more accurately depict the locations of the 100-year flood zones. The maps for Carlisle are available for viewing at the Town Hall and the public will have a 90-day appeal period which will commence some time later in the spring.

**Riverfest Sunrise Canoe Trip:** Ken Harte has generously offered to provide his ornithological expertise for the annual Sunrise Canoe Trip sponsored by the Commission during Riverfest weekend scheduled for June 21-23.

**Benfield Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP):** Willard distributed the draft SWPPP submitted by engineering firm Meridian Associates as required by MEPA for projects that include disturbance to an area of an acre or larger. The Commission reviewed the document and will recommend the following changes: 1) the list of Site Features and Sensitive Areas should document that a portion of the project is being constructed on town owned conservation land; 2) NOAH is incorrectly listed as the owner; 3) provisions should be included to address requirements for a blasting permit in the event that blasting is required within the buffer zone; 4) the area for removal of invasive plants should be identified and method noted; 5) in accordance with the Superseding OOCs issued by the DEP, the plan should include the submission of a construction sequencing plan and arrangements for environmental monitor who will be required to provide monthly reports to the DEP.

Relative to the Construction Sequencing Plan, Brownrigg wanted to be sure that it adequately addresses the issue of avoiding interference with amphibian migration in areas where haybale siltation barriers will be located within in the vicinity of certified vernal pools.

**Benfield Conservation Land Maintenance:** The Commission continues to wait for a response from the Housing Authority relative to discussing ongoing maintenance of the well and septic field for the Benfield Farms Senior Housing Development that is located on conservation land. The Commission had been invited to attend the Housing Authority's next meeting, which conflicted with their previously scheduled meeting. Brown reported having sent a follow up request on behalf of the Commission requesting an alternative time when they can discuss provisions for establishing a long term, joint, fiscal responsibility for management of the areas where there are overlapping considerations.

*9:45 p.m. Tatistcheff moved to adjourn, Burn seconded and all voted in favor.*

Respectfully submitted,  
Mary Hopkins  
Administrative Assistant